



East Africa's pastoralist emergency: Is climate change the straw that breaks the camel's back?

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Abstract:

The global warming trend of climate change is having severe adverse effects on the livelihoods of the Turkana pastoralists of northwestern Kenya. Care has to be taken in making assertions about the impact of climate change. The biggest effects may come not from lower average rainfall but from a widening of the standard deviation as weather extremes become more frequent. In a region already prone to drought, disease and conflict, climate change, access to modern weapons and new viral livestock diseases are now overwhelming pastoralists' coping capacity and deepening the region's roughly 30-year dependency on famine relief. This article examines the livelihood strategies of the Turkana and several poverty reduction programmes currently established, while addressing the reality that traditional pastoralism may no longer be a viable livelihood option, given the effects of climate change, disease and the ensuing conflict over diminishing resources. The findings conclude that the future for traditional Turkana pastoralists is dismal because they continue to depend on an environment that may no longer support them. Humanitarians are recommended to shift their focus to advocate and invest in alternative livelihood strategies that generate economic independence and help the Turkana adapt to their changing environment.

Source: Ask your librarian to help locate this item.

Resource Description

Communication: ☒

resource focus on research or methods on how to communicate or frame issues on climate change; surveys of attitudes, knowledge, beliefs about climate change

A focus of content

Communication Audience: ☒

audience to whom the resource is directed

Public

Exposure : ☒

weather or climate related pathway by which climate change affects health

Extreme Weather Event, Food/Water Security, Human Conflict/Displacement

Extreme Weather Event: Drought

Food/Water Security: Agricultural Productivity

Geographic Feature: ☒

resource focuses on specific type of geography

None or Unspecified

Geographic Location: ☒

resource focuses on specific location

Non-United States

Non-United States: Africa

African Region/Country: African Country

Other African Country: Kenya

Health Impact: ☒

specification of health effect or disease related to climate change exposure

Health Outcome Unspecified

Mitigation/Adaptation: ☒

mitigation or adaptation strategy is a focus of resource

Adaptation

Other Projection Model/Methodology: Discussion only

Population of Concern: A focus of content

Population of Concern: ☒

populations at particular risk or vulnerability to climate change impacts

Low Socioeconomic Status, Workers

Resource Type: ☒

format or standard characteristic of resource

Research Article

Timescale: ☒

time period studied

Time Scale Unspecified

Vulnerability/Impact Assessment: ☒

resource focus on process of identifying, quantifying, and prioritizing vulnerabilities in a system

A focus of content